

Introduction

This inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The report of the inspection is produced for the Archbishop of Liverpool (Code of Canon Law 804 and 806) and for the governors of the school.

The inspectors are members of the Christian Education Department and their associates approved by the Archbishop of Liverpool for this purpose.

Information about the school

St Margaret Mary's is a larger than average sized Catholic Infant School situated in Knowsley and serving the parish of St Margaret Mary. There are 457 children on roll of whom 432 are baptised Catholic, 25 come from other Christian denominations or are Catholics who have not been baptised. There are no pupils from other faith or religious traditions. There are 16 teachers of whom 15 teach Religious Education. Twelve teachers are Catholic and 12 have a suitable qualification in Religious Education. A further three are in the 2nd year of CCRS. Since the last inspection a new Headteacher and Foundation Stage leader have been appointed

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Inspection Judgements

Overall effectiveness:

How effective the school is in providing Catholic Education

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main Findings:-

The school is outstanding overall in providing Catholic Education. There is a clear vision for Catholic Education which is embraced by the whole school community. Since the last inspection the school has securely maintained and built on previously good performance. Self evaluation is rigorous and accurate. Outcomes for pupils are outstanding. There is no significant difference in performance between groups of pupils. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding. The school is successful in addressing the areas it has identified for improvement. The leadership team is deeply motivated and consistently communicates its high expectations to staff in order to secure improvement. Staff are affirmed and supported. Teachers are provided with In-service to support their ongoing development. Realistic and challenging plans stem from the accurate analysis obtained through monitoring and are being used effectively to improve outcomes. Any underperformance is challenged.

Overall the school has an outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school needs to do to improve further

- To further enhance existing high standards of teaching and learning by:
 - paying greater attention in some classes to the tight focus of the 'Here I Am' learning objective especially in the planning of lessons.
- To further enhance the outstanding Catholic Ethos through the planned review of the Mission Statement.
- To further enhance provision in Collective Worship and curriculum Religious Education by:
 - sharing the outstanding practice that exists in the school.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils

On entry to school many children have a limited or no knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. Pupils' attainment in Religious Education is outstanding. Pupils make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Analysis of assessments undertaken provides evidence of pupils' generally attaining in line or above their age and stage of development. There is no difference in performance between pupils of different

gender. Outcomes for pupils with additional or special needs are outstanding. Pupils are becoming increasingly more religiously literate. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are developing appropriate to their age or capacity. They are developing the skills that enable them to think spiritually, ethically and theologically and are becoming more aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life. Any underachievement is challenged by setting appropriately challenging targets. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. Pupils' enjoyment of their learning is outstanding as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and behaviour. Pupils are actively involved in developing and evaluating the Catholic character of the school by their commitment to living out the Mission Statement. This is very much helped by the weekly awards for demonstrating how they live out the Mission Statement. Their involvement in, and response to, Collective Worship together with their care for one another also develops the Catholic ethos. Pupils' have an outstanding sense of belonging to the school community and value and respect others. Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility in the school and wider community by being members of the school and eco councils, being play leaders, by being group leaders in lesson discussions and being class monitors. Pupils benefit from participation in focus weeks such as the one on awe and wonder. Pupils are considerate and caring of others both in school and the wider community. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong and apply this in their personal relationships. Pupils take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions. They praise and acknowledge the contribution of others. They show a readiness to embrace and celebrate their lived experiences.

Pupils are outstanding in responding to and participating in the schools Collective Worship. They are becoming increasingly more confident preparing and even leading worship from their earliest years. They act with reverence and are keen to participate in a variety of gatherings. They sing very joyfully, reflect thoughtfully in silence and join in community prayers appropriately and with confidence. No-one is expected to act in a manner contrary to their beliefs and all show mutual respect. Pupil's knowledge of prayer and liturgy is increasing. They are becoming familiar with a variety of prayer styles. They appreciate and are open to the Word of God in the scriptures. Collective Worship is certainly a natural pause for thought, reflection and prayer in a busy school day.

How good outcomes are for individuals and groups of pupils	
How well pupils achieve in Religious Education	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pupils' standards of attainment in Religious Education 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the quality of pupils' learning and their progress in Religious Education 	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school	1
How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship	1

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education

The quality of teaching is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are interested and engaged and make outstanding progress. Teachers take into account pupils' prior learning and ensure differentiated tasks when planning so that the work consolidates, builds on and extends their knowledge and understanding. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. Outstanding use is made of time and resources: ICT, particularly the Interactive white board, music, gifts, puppets, focus tables and above all the TA's who were interactive with the teachers in delivering of lessons and very much part of the learning process including ongoing assessment. Teachers and others use a variety of strategies to sustain and motivate pupils, enthusiasm, creativity, elements of surprise, effective challenging and probing questioning, talking partners, group work. Pupils are informed of their progress and how to improve both orally and through marking. There is very effective ongoing and naturally effective assessment in each lesson. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their work and progress.

The assessment of pupils work in Religious Education is outstanding. The school has outstanding assessment strategies which provide accurate and detailed information on the achievement of all the pupils. Teachers are able to identify how well pupils are achieving and tackle underachievement by setting appropriate targets and intervention. Teachers enable and encourage pupils to evaluate their own work. Formal assessment tasks are undertaken in line with Archdiocesan guidance. Assessment information is collated by the subject leader and shared with the leadership team, governors and parents. Achievement and effort are celebrated. Pupils are affirmed, know how well they are doing and know what they need to do to improve further.

The curriculum is outstanding in meeting pupils' needs. The school using the Here I Am programme recommended by the Archdiocese meets the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education. A whole school approach is used and appropriate levels of the programme are being followed in different classes. This ensures complete Religious Education entitlement for each child and meets National and Archdiocesan requirements. Of the total curriculum time 10% is allocated to Religious Education. This fulfils the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Planning ensures full coverage of the Religious Education programme. Imaginative and well planned strategies are deployed to enrich pupils learning. Curriculum outlines are provided for parents who are consulted on different issues depending on the topic being covered. The school implements new curriculum developments as appropriate. Enrichment activities such as focus weeks and visits and visitors have a positive impact on the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development of all.

The Collective Worship provided is outstanding in reflecting the Catholic character of the school and taking into account the variety of Faith backgrounds among the pupils. Collective Worship plays a key part in meeting the Spiritual needs of the pupils. Opportunities are provided to enable full, active and conscious participation of the whole school community. Children are enabled to pray formally and informally. The school provides opportunities for Staff to

develop the skills in planning and leading Collective Worship through inservice provision. The teachers provide the necessary resources and opportunities to help children to develop the skills necessary to plan, lead and participate in Collective Worship. Opportunities are provided for parents, carers the local and wider Faith communities to participate in a variety of celebrations of the 'Here I Am' programme and the Church's liturgical year.

How effective the provision is for Catholic Education	
The quality of teaching and purposeful learning in Religious Education	1
The effectiveness of assessment in Religious Education	1
The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school	1

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the schools

Leaders and managers are outstanding in promoting and developing the Catholic life of the school and show an outstanding understanding of and commitment to the Mission of the Church. This is reflected in the Schools own Mission Statement which is summed up for the children in the words: Loving, Learning and Growing together with Jesus. The Mission Statement is currently under review. All who form part of the school community including parents, Priests, governors and children are being involved in the process. The Mission Statement is lived owned and celebrated by all. It came up both during lessons and Collective Worship. Certificates are awarded to the children for demonstrating how they live out the statement. The aims and practical objectives direct and guide every aspect of school life and are a useful tool by which the school can evaluate its effectiveness. Outstanding opportunities are provided for the staff and pupils to play an active part in Catholic life and Mission of the school through involvement in the development of the Mission Statement (especially during the focus week), school council, fundraising, being play leaders and welcoming reception into the school. Each class has also developed a school class charter. The Catholic life of the school is also enriched by the close links with the parish and the various celebrations there throughout the year. The Parish Priest is obviously very much part of the school community and his input is valued by all. The Self Evaluation Document provides evidence of the schools monitoring, searching analysis and self challenge. Their analysis provides a basis to celebrate the schools strengths and outlining areas for development. The SED is thorough, accurate and comprehensive and obviously has a great impact on the Catholic life of the school. The school provides outstanding induction and inservice training to enable staff to further understand the Church's Mission in Education and play their unique part in it through input from Fr Mark Moran, Fr Brendan Rice and attendance at CCRS and Spirituality and leadership conferences.

Leaders and managers are outstanding in the way they use monitoring data to evaluate the schools performance, celebrate, and plan future improvements. Monitoring impacts well on the future planning. The subject leader is

outstanding in her, leadership and management of Religious Education. She shows the enthusiasm and energy of a newly qualified teacher and introduces new initiatives when appropriate. Excellent documentation guides and directs all staff in the delivery of the subject. This is updated as necessary.

Governors are outstanding in fulfilling their responsibilities. They have effectively helped to shape the direction of the school through their commitment and dedication and the benefit of their expertise

Leadership at all levels respects difference, values diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Prayer, worship and the liturgical life of the school reflects and respects the religious diversity within the school. There are positive relationships at every level within the school and in the immediate neighbourhood served by the school. They have great links with local primary and high school and put great energy into facilitating transition from one phase to another. They work with local schools on developing community cohesion. They sing in old people's homes and have close links with veterans especially through their involvement in the Remembrance Garden and Remembrance Day. Dialogue and collaboration is encouraged with people who hold different beliefs and values. Parents are consulted regularly and involved in a variety of ways in the life of the school and are always encouraged to share their own faith and culture. The use of the 'Here I am' programme promotes community cohesion. Children have explored the beliefs and values of other faiths and religions particularly Judaism and Hinduism. This helps to promote tolerance and respect for those who think differently.

How effective leaders and managers are in developing the Catholic Life of the School	
How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils	1
The extent to which the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the Catholic dimension of the school so areas needing development are addressed decisively and responsibilities met	1
How effectively leaders and managers promote community cohesion	1